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117

| APPLICATION NO.       | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/632,809            | 08/04/2003  | Tsutomu Kiyono       | 116784              | 4610             |
| 25944                 | 7590        | 03/26/2007           |                     |                  |
| OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC |             |                      | EXAMINER            |                  |
| P.O. BOX 19928        |             |                      | QIN, JIANCHUN       |                  |
| ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320  |             |                      |                     |                  |
|                       |             |                      | ART UNIT            | PAPER NUMBER     |
|                       |             |                      | 2837                |                  |

| SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE | MAIL DATE  | DELIVERY MODE |
|--|------------|---------------|
| 3 MONTHS                               | 03/26/2007 | PAPER         |

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/632,809

Applicant(s)

KIYONO ET AL.

Examiner

Jianchun Qin

Art Unit

2837

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 February 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19 and 21-26 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22 and 24-26 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/20/07 & 02/07/07.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 22 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kitakaze et al. (JP2002351459, machine translation of English).

Regarding claims 22 and 26, Kitakaze et al. teach a method and a storage medium for storing computer program instruction for performing the method, for playing a music game with a percussion instrument (Drawing 1; Abstract; para. 0009), comprising: providing the percussion instrument (Drawings 1 and 2, elements 31-33;

para. 0010, 0064) that is not a button; detecting that the percussion instrument is beaten in a game start acceptance state prior to starting the game (Abstract; para. 0005-0006); outputting a percussion instrument signal as a game start signal based on the detection (Abstract; para. 0005-0007); and starting the game operation when the percussion instrument signal is received (para. 0005-0006 and 0017).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claim 24 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitakaze et al. (JP2002351459, machine translation of English) in view of Boon (U.S. Pub. No. 20040014513).

Kitakaze et al. teach a method for playing a music game with a percussion instrument including the subject matter discussed above, in particular, control buttons (250, 251) for controlling the game operation (para. 0017). Kitakaze et al. do not mention expressly: one of the buttons outputs a game start signal; and outputting the game start signal when the button is operated in the game start acceptance state, wherein the game starts when at least one of the percussion instrument signal and the game start signal is received.

Boon teaches an apparatus and computer program for playing a music game, including: providing a button (58) that outputs a game start signal; and outputting the game start signal when the button is operated in the game start acceptance state, wherein the game starts when at least one of the percussion instrument signal and the game start signal is received (section 0026).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a new button in the invention of Kitakaze et al. for starting the game, as taught by Boon, in order to provide an easy-to-use and cost-effective approach to start the game. The mere application of a known technique to a specific instance by those skilled in the art would have been obvious.

6. Claim 25 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kitakaze et al. (JP2002351459, machine translation of English).

Kitakaze et al. teach a method for playing a music game with a percussion instrument including the subject matter discussed above, in particular, said percussion instrument is a drum (para. 0010). Kitakaze et al. do not mention expressly: the percussion instrument is beaten by a drum stick.

However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a drum stick to beat the percussion instrument such as a drum, since striking a drum by a drum stick is well known in the art.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

7. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23 are allowed.

***Reasons for Allowance***

8. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Please see Office action dated 10/17/2006 for reasons for allowance of claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21 and 23.

***Response to Arguments***

9. Applicant's arguments received 02/07/07 with respect to claims 22 and 24-26 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Retarding amended claim 22, Applicants argued that "Kitakaze does not teach or suggest starting the game when the percussion instrument signal (not a signal from a button) is received" because "Kitakaze discloses in Fig. 1 and at paragraph [0017], to start the game when a decision button 250 and selection buttons 251, 251 of the direction section 25 are operated, or when a transparent tablet for screen 11A, which can replace the direction section 25, is operated". These arguments are not persuasive. It is the Examiner's position that, as set forth in section 2 above in this Office action, the Kitakaze reference does disclose or teach or suggest all the subject matters recited in claim 22. In particular, Kitakaze discloses that the game is not started physically until an initiation signal is received from the stroke actuation field judging equipment (para. 0005-0006 and 0017). The rejection is therefore maintained.

The rest of the Applicant's arguments regarding the dependent claims are reliant

Art Unit: 2837

upon the issue discussed above, and are deemed to be non-persuasive as well for the reasons provided above for independent claim 22.

### ***Prior Art Citations***

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

1) Tanaka et al. (U. S. Pub. No. 20030061932) is entitled to "Simple electronic musical instrument, player's console and signal processing system incorporated therein".

2) Nishimoto et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 20010034014 A1) is entitled to "Physical motion state evaluation apparatus".

3) Yanase (U.S. Pat. No. 6822148) is entitled "Electronic pad".

4) Yanase et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 20040016339) is entitled "Electronic pad with vibration isolation features".

### ***Contact Information***

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jianchun Qin whose telephone number is (571) 272-5981. The examiner can normally be reached on 8am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lincoln Donovan can be reached on (571) 272-1988. The fax phone

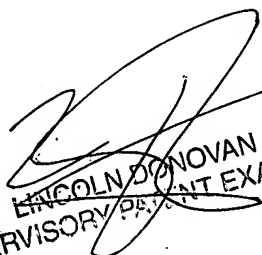
Art Unit: 2837

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Jianchun Qin  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2837

JQ 

  
LINCOLN DONOVAN  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER